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SCHAKOWSKY REACTS TO BUSH ADMINISTRATION REPORT BLAMING PERU FOR DEATH OF AMERICAN MISSIONARIES

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) was not surprised to hear a news report on CNN where a "senior Bush administration official" revealed that the Peruvian Air Force shoulders most of the blame for the shoot-down of a missionary plane that resulted in the death of two innocent Americans. The official stated that an investigation into the incident showed that the Peruvian Air Force pilot did not follow proper procedures.

"It is because of the U.S.-Peruvian shoot down policy that two innocent Americans are dead. For the U.S. government to forego most of the blame for the shoot-down of the missionary plane and only point fingers at the Peruvian Air Force misses the point that it is our policy that is misguided," Schakowsky said.

Schakowsky, who is a critic of the U.S-Peruvian force-down aerial intercept program and the use of private military contractors in the Andean region, has repeatedly made requests of the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency about the incident. And in a June 6 meeting with James Mack, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs and others, Schakowsky requested additional materials pertaining to the taxpayer funded private military contractors in the Andean region. To date, no information has been provided.

"The Bush Administration, the State Department, and the CIA have not been forthcoming with the American people and members of Congress. They've stonewalled, delayed, but mostly ignored demands for answers about the shoot down and the use of private military contractors in the region," Schakowsky said.

"It is ironic that members of Congress receive more information from the media than they do from this Administration and its State Department," Schakowsky concluded.

Schakowsky is the author of the Andean Region Contractor Accountability Act (ARCAA), legislation that would prohibit the federal government from funding private armies in the Andean region. Currently, taxpayer funds are used to pay private companies hundred of millions of dollars to fight the war on drugs in the Andean region.